

For Immediate Release

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*Washington, D.C.* – Today, Congressman Sires demanded further action be taken by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to improve safety and limit the noise nuisance of aircraft over the Hudson River. As a member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Congressman Sires participated in the Subcommittee on Aviation's hearing to discuss the recent aircraft tragedy on the Hudson River.

"The FAA has taken steps to improve safety in the Hudson River Corridor, such as dividing the airspace into separate corridors, but they are not doing enough for the safety of residents in Hudson County," said Congressman Sires. "If this accident had occurred over a school or a residential area, there could have been devastating damage and loss of life."

The Committee questioned witnesses from the FAA, the National Transportation Safety Board, and other transportation associations. The witnesses focused on the recently released New York Airspace Task Force recommendations for the Hudson River, including dividing the airspace into distinct corridors to separate aircraft flying over the river from those operating local helicopters. The Task Force also included a recommendation that helicopters over the Hudson River fly below 1,000 feet. The testimony of the witnesses did not include information on how aircraft below 1,000 feet would be regulated or whether the large number of aircraft over the Hudson River would be limited.

"The FAA stated that people have an unlimited right to fly through this corridor. What about the rights of people on the ground? Who is watching out for their safety and quality of life? Having helicopters fly at lower altitudes creates a constant noise nuisance and safety issues for those in New Jersey living along the Hudson River. With 20,000 helicopters and other aircraft flying over the area, the FAA needs to do more to regulate this traffic – they must increase training for pilots, improve technology on the aircraft, and most importantly, limit the number of aircraft, in particular helicopters over the Hudson River. I will continue to work with FAA to ensure these actions move forward for the safety of residents in the 13th District."

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